



National Wildfire Coordinating Group

Budget Guidance FY 2016

***Prepared by the NWCG Program Management Unit and
the NWCG Budget Advisory Unit***

Approved by the NWCG Executive Board

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NWCG Funding

NWCG funding is provided by the federal member agencies through their fire management program budget allocations. Contribution percentages are stated in the Memorandum of Understanding, "Title." The U.S. Fire Administration separately determines its annual contribution and program emphasis.

Annual Budget Development

The annual NWCG budget is developed as follows:

- **February:** The NWCG Executive Board issues annual budget guidance.
- **April:** NWCG committees and subgroups submit annual funding requests to the NWCG Program Management Unit (PMU).
- **April/May:** The NWCG PMU evaluates the requests based on criteria established in this document. The PMU develops a draft budget proposal in coordination with committee chairs and the Budget Advisory Unit (BAU) for the NWCG Executive Board. The NWCG Executive Board modifies the proposal as necessary and approves the annual NWCG budget.
- **June:** The NWCG Executive Board provides, through the Budget Advisory Unit, a proposed budget to the USDA Forest Service and the US DOI Office of Wildland Fire to create a preliminary allocation for the coming fiscal year.
- **October through January:** NWCG funding is allocated when the member funding agencies receive their appropriations.

For more specific dates see Appendix A: Budget Cycle Timeline.

Project Funding Requests

NWCG committees routinely conduct new and ongoing work in order to accomplish their objectives. When this work requires NWCG funding, project funding requests must meet the following standards:

- Submit funding requests with the *NWCG Project Funding Request*. See Appendix B for an example of the *NWCG Project Funding Request*.
- Submit funding requests exclusively for services, agreements, or contract costs that are related to the NWCG mission and the specific objectives of the committee.
- Requests must include anticipated costs for the upcoming fiscal year and the following two fiscal years. This enables out-year budget planning and identifies projects nearing completion and projects with ongoing funding requirements.
- Funding requests for new projects or existing project operations and maintenance costs must support the development or maintenance of standards, products/guidelines, qualifications, and training.
- NWCG publications proposed for updates or revisions must be coordinated with your respective branch coordinator, BEFORE requesting NWCG budget funds. See the Products section in the *NWCG Operating Principles and Guidelines* at <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/pms900.pdf>.
- Federal employees request travel through their agencies.
- NASF state travel is requested by submitting a "Request for Travel Authorization".

Training Funding Requests

When project funding requests are training related, they are initially routed through the NWCG Training Branch prior to further evaluation. Training related requests must meet the following standards:

- Submit *NWCG Project Funding Request* to Deb Fleming, NWCG Training Branch Manager, dlfleming@blm.gov, 208-387-5745. See Appendix B for an example of the *NWCG Project Funding Request*.
- Training funding requests include:
 - Proposals for new training courses.
 - Proposals for revision of existing courses. These are initiated by NWCG subgroups with training curriculum maintenance responsibilities, which are stated at: http://training.nwcg.gov/sect_Training_Curriculum_%20Maintenance_Plan.htm.
 - Other training requests (e.g. course or curriculum assessments, PPTs to be used for training purposes).

Information Technology Funding Requests

For the purposes of this guidance, information technology (IT) is defined as the development, implementation, and maintenance of computer hardware and software systems to organize and communicate information electronically. Starting in 2015, IT funding requests are not part of the NWCG budget process.

If your committee or subgroup has a new idea on anything IT related please talk to Paul Schlobohm, Fire Management Board (FMB)/Wildland Fire Information & Technology (WFIT) Liaison, at 208-387-5269, or pschlobo@blm.gov.

For existing IT projects, committee and subgroups should continue to work closely with the managing partner (hosting agency) to ensure related IT projects continue to meet business needs. WFIT provides direction for their process at <http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/WFIT/library.shtml>. Paul Schlobohm is available to help you with this process and working with your managing partner.

Prioritizing Funding Requests

Project funding requests will be evaluated and prioritized by the NWCG Program Management Unit. Training funding request evaluations will include NWCG Training Branch and the NWCG Training Committee. These evaluations will determine the annual budget recommendations forwarded to the NWCG Executive Board. Requests will be evaluated and prioritized based on the following factors.

- **Relevance:** Is the project relevant to the NWCG mission as stated in the NWCG Charter? Is it relevant to the specific objectives of the submitting committee or entity?
- **Scope and Impact:** What is the impact of the project on the larger NWCG membership? Does it benefit field level firefighters and fire managers? Will it improve national standardization in wildland fire management? Will it enhance firefighter safety?
- **Purview:** Is the project unique to wildland fire and does it sensibly fall under the purview of the NWCG? Is the NWCG the apparent agent to achieve the project's objectives?
- **Sustainability:** Will the project have a long term impact? Will it address a significant and consequential issue or concern? Will its benefits last beyond project completion?
- **Feasibility:** Is the project achievable? Does the submitting entity have a proven track record of completing projects?

- **Efficiency:** Is the project cost effective? Will it be completed in a specified and finite time-frame? Does it duplicate existing efforts? Is it a collaborative effort with a non-NWCG entity?
- **Training Specific Factors:** In addition to the above factors, training funding evaluations will consider the following: Is the training required or recommended? Does the scope of the training support multiple disciplines? Is the request for new development or for revision of an existing course?

Reporting Requirements

Committees and other entities that receive NWCG funding must submit quarterly accomplishment and expenditure reports in April, July, and November. Use the *NWCG Project Expenditure Report* provided in Appendix C.

Unspent Funds

All NWCG funding requests that did not receive initial funding will be considered for “mid-year” and “third quarter” funding should funds be available after the April and July Project Expenditure Reports are reviewed. The NWCG PMU will coordinate with the appropriate committee chairs and the Budget Advisory Unit to develop recommendations for the NWCG Executive Board. NWCG funding is annual; “end-of-year” unspent funds do not carry over.

Appendix A

Budget Cycle Timeline

Time Period	Task	Responsible Party	Comments
January 2015	Develop final draft of annual budget guidance.	<i>NWCG Budget Liaison, BAU Branch Coordinators</i>	Collaborate with BAU to ensure adherence to agency policy, rules, and regulations, etc.
February 2015	Issue NWCG budget guidance. Memo to Committees on FY 2016 budget guidance.	<i>NWCG Budget Liaison</i> prepares memo	<i>FY 2016 NWCG Project Funding Request</i> will be an attachment to the guidance.
February 2015	NWCG Publications – Committees coordinate updates/revisions thru NWCG product manager at BLM_FA_NWCG_Products@blm.gov	<i>Committee Chairs</i>	Product requests see Appendix B.
April 27, 2015 Monday	Budget requests submitted to Branch Coordinators (non-training). Training budget requests submitted to Training Branch Manager.	<i>Committee Chairs</i> Branch Coordinators Training Branch Manager.	Use <i>FY 2016 NWCG Project Funding Request</i>
April 27, 2015 Monday	Curriculum Maintenance Plan annual updates due to Training Branch Manager for Category A courses.	<i>Committee Chairs who have course maintenance responsibilities</i>	See http://training.nwcg.gov/sect_curriculum_management_plan.htm .
May 2015	Review budget requests with Committee Chairs. Review and prioritize projects within available budget, share with Committee Chairs.	<i>Branch Coordinators</i> <i>Committee Chairs</i>	Develop proposed list of budget requests across all branches.
May 2015	BAU review proposed list of projects for funding. Identify issues or concerns with proposed projects.	<i>BAU</i>	Joint meeting with BAU, Branch Coordinators, Training Branch Manager, and NWCG Manager. Discuss and resolve issues or concerns.
June 17 2015	NWCG EB approval of budget allocations.	<i>NWCG Executive Board</i>	This decision may be altered when final budget is received.
June 2015 or later	Apply project information to NWCG Shared Costs Worksheet.	<i>BAU Lead</i> for Interagency Budget allocation spread sheet.	Official budget allocation tracking sheet for the NWCG partners.
October 2015 or later	BAU work with Committee Chairs regarding cost coding structure and accountability tracking.	<i>Agency Budget Staff, Committee Chairs</i>	Once Appropriation is signed

Appendix B

Sample NWCG Project Funding Request



NWCG Project Funding Request

DRAFT 1/6/2015

A. Project Name and Type				
1. Project Name: select from drop down list. If not found proceed to #2.				
2. Project Name: if not in the drop down list in #1 above, type in brief and concise name				
3. Project Type: Select from drop down list				
B. Requestor Information				
1. NWCG Entity:				
2. Committee Name:		4. Committee Priority:		
			6. Total Committee Projects	
3. Subgroup Name:		5. Subgroup Priority:		
			7. Total Subgroup Projects	
8. Expenditure Lead: <i>responsible for expending the project funds?</i> Name, agency, phone, email: Expenditure Lead:				
9. Agency expending the funds? <i>(Select one!)</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> BIA <input type="checkbox"/> BLM <input type="checkbox"/> FS <input type="checkbox"/> FWS <input type="checkbox"/> NPS		
C. Project Description -- If more space is needed attach a word document.				
1. Describe the project. Be specific and concise: Type description here				
2. Describe the business need. Why is this project needed. What is the benefit. What problem or issue is being resolved? Type description here				
3. If this project is not funded what is the level of consequence to the wildland fire community? Explain your selection.		<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High		
Type explanation here				
D. Cost Estimates		Request FY 2016	Request FY 2017	Request FY 2018
Round costs to nearest \$500				
1. Contracts/Agreements – specify a contract or agreement. Identify vendor if known		List total cost of agreement or contract- do not itemize	List total cost of agreement or contract- do not itemize	
Contract/Agreement	Vendor			
2. Other (Please Itemize) Do not list contract costs. Do not request funds for travel. See Budget Request Form Instructions.		Itemize	Itemize	Itemize
Total Cost		\$0	\$0	\$0

Appendix C
NWCG Project Expenditure Report



NWCG Project Expenditure Report

Committee or Subgroup Name

Project name

Summary of funding	
Amount requested	
Amount approved	
Comments	
Midyear - April	
Accomplishments	
Funds Expended	
Excess Funds	
Additional Funds Need	
Purpose of Additional Funds	
Third Quarter - July	
Accomplishments	
Funds Expended	
Excess Funds	
Additional Funds Need	
Purpose of Additional Funds	
End of Year - November	
Accomplishments	
Funds Expended	
Excess Funds	